

SCOTLAND AND  
PRESBYTERIANISM  
VINDICATED

BEING

A Critical Review

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME OF MR ANDREW LANG'S  
*HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.*

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EDINBURGH:

1905.

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# SCOTLAND AND PRESBYTERIANISM VINDICATED.

## Expository.

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### CHAPTER I.

HOW SMALL NATIONALITIES SUFFER WHEN CONNECTED WITH LARGE ONES — POLISH AND GREEK RENEGADES.

SMALL countries, allied to or incorporated with large and powerful ones, are often subjected to the misfortune of having bitter attacks made on their liberties or their national honour by members of their own race. Some of the most bitter enemies of Polish nationality have been Polish renegades who have gone over to the service of Russia, and have given their abilities to the relentless oppressor of their native land. So did Greece suffer in former days from her unscrupulous sons, who carried their talents to the service of the Turks. In Britain, with its four nationalities, differing con-

siderably in race and in religion, and with one of these largely predominating in wealth and population, there is a wide field for enterprising adventurers to display their talents in the same line; and though, happily, the restraints of law in Britain prevent them from becoming the oppressors of their countrymen, in the manner that is or was common enough to such characters in Russia or in Turkey, yet there is still open to them many petty and ignoble ways, by which they think they can advance their interests with the great English majority, either commercially or politically. Such men often endeavour to ingratiate themselves with the English public or the English governing class, by a course of detraction of the creed or the national honour of their native land, as contrasted with that of the great dispenser of patronage and of power—England. It has been bitterly said of such creatures, by some caustic Irishman, that if there is an Irishman to be roasted alive, there is always another Irishman who is ready to turn the spit. Wales has had plenty of lickspittles who were ready to traduce their own country, and at its expense to glorify England, if they thought it would conduce to their personal advantage. Nor has Scotland been devoid of natives of her soil—men of the Mac-Sycophant type—who are and have



ever been ready to belittle their own country, and to degrade so far as they can her history and her creed, if they thought that by so doing, they could personally recommend themselves to the English public, or to the English governing class, who practically control the government of Britain. Have we not had one Scottish politician who publicly bewailed that the battle of Bannockburn was ever fought or won by Scotland? And also, have we not had it insinuated by another, or by the same politician, that Sir William Wallace was perhaps the same William Waleys who was sentenced at Perth about 1290 for some petty theft? We have had, forsooth, in recent years a young and talented Scot, but Anglicised at Oxford, who published a book in which Barbie, a village in which nearly every one is vile, is depicted as a typical representation of Scottish life. And now we have Mr Andrew Lang, another clever Scot, but also Anglicised at Oxford, who in the third volume of his *History of Scotland* has attacked in a most atrocious way the national creed of Scotland; and has also attempted to vilify her national honour in a manner worthy of an Old Bailey barrister of a most pronounced type.

## Expository.

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### CHAPTER II.

SCOTLAND ALLEGED TO BE THE MOST FANATICAL  
COUNTRY IN WESTERN EUROPE IN THE SEVEN-  
TEENTH CENTURY—HER MERITS CONSTRUED  
TO BE DEMERITS BY NARROW-MINDED CRITICS.

DURING the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all Central and Western Europe was a hotbed of fanaticism and bigotry, owing to the great struggle that then prevailed—of the Papal power for complete supremacy, of the Protestant powers for existence. Some modern writers, in dealing with the period in question, have fallen into serious blunders when they have ventured to apportion the blame of extreme fanaticism to this one or the other of the contending nations. Mr Buckle, in his *History of Civilisation*, singled out Scotland as being the country that excelled in the nature and extent of its bigotry, and several smaller and more superficial writers have,

before and since his time, dealt with the actions of the Scottish Protestants, and especially with those of the Scottish Covenanters, from the same peculiar and narrow standpoint. But philosophy teaches us, that fanaticism and bigotry are primarily the children of ignorance; and surely it is somewhat of an anomaly, that the Scots, who were in the seventeenth century one of the best educated peoples in Europe, should be classed by some writers as also the most fanatical. A closer enquiry into the circumstances of the time will, however, show that the philosophical deduction is right, and that it is the superficial historians who are wrong. As a matter of fact, the merit of the Scots in the matter of their superior intelligence and education, has been the cause of their being harshly judged; not only by foreign writers, but by some of their own countrymen. The comparatively high standard of intelligence among the Scottish commonalty of the Lowlands, took this shape among others, that when the great struggle began between Charles the First and the Scots in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, the common people participated in it in a fashion that did not prevail to the same extent in any other of the neighbouring countries. The Scottish Church being essentially democratic, its preachers appealed constantly to their flocks, not



merely by sermons, but by pamphlets. Polemical literature became one of the great political features of the time. These printed sermons and pamphlets have been preserved to the present day, in a no doubt very imperfect fashion, but still in an abundance that is not approached by any other people during that troublous time. There are comparatively few records of the religious feeling of the German people during the Thirty Years' War. If we except the Puritan records of the English people of the period, England may be said to be almost destitute of any record of the religious feeling of the common people. And of course the Irish Roman Catholics were utterly voiceless, except when their ecclesiastical leaders declared their mind. The result is, that the Scottish printed sermons and pamphlets have become to writers dealing with the religious struggle and the religious fervour of that period, a treasury of quotation. They have been used to illustrate the bigotry of the time in Central and Northern Europe, as the "Kitchen-middens" of Denmark have been used by archæologists to illustrate the manners and customs of the inhabitants of Northern Europe in prehistoric times. But it is obvious enough to every intelligent thinker, that the manners of the tribes adjacent to Denmark at the period in question could

not have been greatly different to those of the Danes, although we are not able to prove it by archæological relics. So with the state of religious feeling in the countries adjacent to Scotland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is a philosophical certainty, that religious fanaticism was strongest and of the most cruel character in the countries most steeped in ignorance and superstition, and therefore that in Roman Catholic Germany and in Ireland it was much stronger than in Protestant Germany, England, and Scotland. Of these Protestant countries it is also more than probable, that the Scots common people, bigoted as they seem to have been from the printed records that have come down to us, were not so bigoted, or at least not more so, than the corresponding classes in England and Northern Germany. We have printed evidence of the state of Scottish popular feeling, but we have not similar evidence of the state of English or North German popular feeling, simply because, with the exception of the English Puritans, they were more ignorant and therefore comparatively voiceless. Because the Scots commonalty was then, the only people able to give to a large extent, printed expression to their religious and political views, it is an utterly illogical and unphilosophical conclusion to infer that they

were therefore more bigoted and more fanatical than their Protestant and Papal neighbours.

### THE SCOTS' "BARK WORSE THAN THEIR BITE."

As regards the charge of cruelty, so freely indulged in by some writers against the Scots supporters of "The Solemn League and Covenant," let me here remark, that the rulers of the Scots at that time were the ministers or preachers—men, many of them, full of narrow zeal, whose energy and religious fervour impelled them to give strong utterance in speech or in pamphlet to their views of public affairs. But if we turn from such mere expressions of opinion to actions, we shall find, that as regards mildness, the Scots compare most favourably with any other people of that time. In Ireland there was cruel persecution on the English side, and wholesale massacre on the Irish side. In England there was the Star Chamber persecutions, which sent thousands of God-fearing Englishmen to the Continent, or to North America, to escape its cruel decrees. And on the Continent there were the awful horrors of the "Thirty Years' War." Amid such national excesses, the actions of the Scots were in reality, comparatively

mild and tame. The excesses of their fanaticism found vent chiefly in words, which, as I have pointed out, have been handed down to us in innumerable pamphlets. But there was not a great number of excesses of cruelty in Scotland when under the control of the so-called wild and bigoted preachers. Their rule was rude and noisy, but comparatively bloodless. Mr Lang cites the killing of the Irish prisoners after the battle of Philiphaugh, and the massacre of the garrison at Dunaverty. No doubt these acts were atrocious and cruel. But in those times in England and Scotland, the Irish Papists were regarded as outside the pale of humanity, and little or no mercy was extended to them either in England or in Scotland. The massacre of the Protestants in Ireland in 1641 made both English and Scots furious against all Irish Catholics. In England, all Jesuits were liable to be condemned to death, and several so suffered. Not only this: after the Irish massacre, by a Parliamentary ordinance every Irishman found in England was liable to the death penalty, and this was enforced more than once. It is desirable to bear these facts in mind, when we come to the denunciations by Mr Lang of the intolerable cruelties of the Scots. These were bad enough, no doubt, but they were few and far between, compared

with the cruel excesses after the Restoration. Those were the policy of a settled and strong government, and were continued for a generation. The excesses of the Scots were generally committed under or after the excitement of battle, and were generally the work of some faction, not of the nation.

## Expository.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE STATE OF AFFAIRS ON THE CONTINENT— “THE THIRTY YEARS’ WAR.”

TO properly understand the religious doings in Great Britain, we have not only to look to Ireland but to the Continent. In 1625 France was comparatively quiet, although in England and Scotland the memory of the awful massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572 still lingered, and helped to keep up the Protestant dread of the power and the cruelties of Rome. Then in Germany, came that most cruel and devastating of all the wars of modern Europe—“The Thirty Years’ War,” which began in 1618, and continued till the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. It was a war, not merely to advance the establishment of the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, but to recover for the German Ecclesiastical Princes and other dignitaries of that Church, the lands and powers which



they held before the Reformation. The war, on the part of the Roman Catholic forces especially, was carried on with the most relentless ferocity. At one time, it seemed as if Protestantism was to be completely crushed in Northern, as well as in Southern Germany. The Protestant Princes were unable to contend against the powerful armies of the Roman Catholics. Magdeburg, one of the great centres of German Protestantism, was stormed and sacked by Tilly in 1631, under such circumstances of atrocious savagery, as to send a thrill of horror through all the Protestant peoples of Europe. Out of a population said to number nearly forty thousand souls, it is stated that hardly one-fourth was left alive—the massacre being indiscriminate of men, women, and children. Bohemia, in thirty years was forced to become Roman Catholic, and through this lost two-thirds of its population. In Germany, it is estimated that during the war, twelve or thirteen millions out of twenty millions, perished by the sword or by famine and disease; and Germany, which previously had been the most prosperous and most populous country in Europe, was so devastated and depopulated, as to become for a century or more, but a shadow of her former greatness.

## THE EFFECT ON BRITISH OPINION.

Need it be a matter of wonder, then, that the tale of these awful atrocities, perpetrated in Germany by the Roman Catholic armies of the Empire, should have stirred the Protestant peoples of England and Scotland to their very depths. Thousands of young Scots had gone over to Germany to assist the Protestant cause, and as these returned during the earlier years of the reign of Charles the First, with the information they had gained during their campaigns under Gustavus Adolphus and other Protestant leaders, they spread abroad through Scotland a dread of, and a fierce hatred, not only of Roman Catholicism, but of all tendencies towards that form of religion which might exist in their own country. It can thus be easily understood that the Scottish people were ready to assume a most determined attitude against any attempt to interfere with their national faith, especially so when the interference was in the direction of an alien form of prelacy.

In England, also, the aggressive movements of the Papacy throughout Europe had caused great alarm and anxiety. Professor Gardiner, in his work on *The Puritan Revolution*, pages 13 and 14, says:—

“The fear of change to Protestantism from the

engagements of James with Spain, and from the engagements of Charles with France, had produced its effect on the upper classes of the nation. . . . Every year the fear of Papal aggression grew stronger. On the Continent, the Catholic powers had been winning their way to a supremacy, of which there had been no example since the great victories of the Reformation. In 1622 the Palatinate had been lost to Protestantism. In 1626 the Danish resistance had been broken at Lutter, and now the whole of North Germany, with the exception of two or three seaport towns, lay helpless at the feet of Wallenstein and Tilly. In France, Rochelle had succumbed to Richelieu . . . the mass of thinking men was thus lashed into indignation at anything which savoured of faithlessness to Protestantism."

Such was the state of feeling in England, running substantially, it will be observed, with that prevalent in Scotland.

With this strong Protestant feeling existing in England, Charles and Laud, with fatal obstinacy, chose to force on the Scottish people, ritualistic forms and doctrines which excited their strong indignation. Nor were these ecclesiastical changes that were attempted to be forced on Scotland, confined merely to doctrine or to ritual. On this subject, Sir Walter Scott says :—

"To settle a national church, with a gradation of dignified clergy, required large funds, which Scotland could not afford for such a purpose. In this dilemma,

the king and his counsellors resolved, by one sweeping Act of Revocation, to resume to the Crown all the tithes and benefices which had been conferred on laymen at the Reformation, and thus obtain the funds necessary to endow the projected bishoprics."

So determined was the attitude of the Scottish nobility against the resumption of such lands, that Charles and his English advisers were obliged to give way to a large extent; but the attempt rankled in the minds of the Scottish nobles and drove them almost unanimously to take the popular side against the encroachments of Charles in both Church and State affairs.

#### ANGLICAN MEDDLING WITH THE RELIGION OF THE SCOTS.

It is well to bear these facts in mind when we begin to consider the position taken up by the Scottish people against Charles and his English advisers. Mr Lang would lead his readers to believe that Charles was compelled to interfere with the religious views of the Scottish people, because they were inconsistent with civil government. But this is an incorrect presentment of the situation. It was not the Church of Scotland that began to interfere with the Church of England, but the Church

of England ; in other words, Charles and Laud, that began to interfere with the Church of Scotland. The Scottish people, in the early years of the reign of Charles the First, were not very well satisfied with their national church, owing to the changes towards prelacy that had been carried out by the interference of James the First; but if they had been left alone, and allowed time to work out for themselves, not merely the question between Prelacy and Presbyterianism, but the settlement of the contending claims of the ecclesiastical and civil courts, they would in due time have arrived at a satisfactory solution of that great problem. What the Scots asked of Charles, as noted by Mr Lang, was (page 62) "to permit all matters ecclesiastical to be determined by Assemblies, all civil matters by Parliaments"—the very essence of modern British policy. There was, in truth, no people at that time in the world who were so competent as the Scots to govern themselves, if they were left alone, and not excited and enraged by foreign interference. There was then, as I have already pointed out, no people among whom the advantages of education had penetrated so deeply, and there was no people more resolute and more determined than they to assert and maintain their rights against the encroachments of kings or prelates.

If left alone to solve their own difficulties in their own way, there can be no doubt that Scotland would have been among the first of kingdoms to establish a form of religion that would have worked reasonably and harmoniously with the civil power. But this was not to be. The bigotry of Charles and the Anglican leaders endeavoured to force unity of ritual, if not of faith, on the Scottish people, and they naturally protested, and in the end took up arms to maintain their national rights. If some of the more fanatical and bigoted of the Scottish Presbyterians indulged in extreme language, and in some cases in extreme actions, these were the faults of the times, when moderation in religious matters was not practised in any country, and when religious toleration was unknown.

#### WHAT PROFESSOR GARDINER SAYS ON THIS SUBJECT.

On this head, Professor Gardiner has a few pregnant observations, which are well worth the attention of my readers. He says (*The Puritan Revolution*, pages 105 and 106):—

“Presbyterianism was with the Glasgow Assembly, a form of Church government established by God Himself, and announced to men in the Bible. Christians



had no right to be governed in ecclesiastical matters otherwise than by the clergy, with such association of the laity as the special church orders of any given country might direct. But there was to be no control by bishops, no control by the king, no liberty of speech or writing. For all that, the Scottish movement was a necessary preparation for liberty. Not till the majority of a nation is left undisturbed in its religious or political principles can it venture to accord freedom to a minority. The resolution of Charles and Laud to compel a nation to worship God in a way which the mass of that nation believed to be displeasing to God, was rightly met by the assertion that to the mass which worships, and not to the few who direct, belongs the choice of the forms in which worship should be clothed. Whilst the conflict lasted, it was no more possible to be tolerant of disaffection than it is possible for a general in the field to be tolerant of disaffection. But the mere success of the majority of the nation would eventually bring toleration in its train."

These are true words, if it be understood, which Professor Gardiner apparently implies, that the lay element is to be associated equally with the clerical element in the government of the church. And by the lay element I mean not to exclude, but expressly to include, the ruling elders in the Presbyterian polity. These being ordained to the service of the church, are technically not laymen; but politically or philosophically they are not only laymen, but are the direct representatives of the laity in the government of the church.

## Critical.

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### CHAPTER IV.

#### MR LANG'S UNFITNESS AS A HISTORIAN—HIS UNFAIRNESS AND NARROW-MINDEDNESS.

I HAVE now explained as clearly as I can, the position of affairs on the accession of Charles, and the excited state of religious feeling in England and Scotland, resulting not merely from the tyrannical political and ecclesiastical doings of Charles and his admirers, but also from the actions of the Roman Catholics in Ireland and on the Continent. It is characteristic of Mr Lang and of his unfitness for his task as a historian, that these all-important correlative proceedings seem to be regarded by him as to be altogether outside his sphere of work. We have from him most copious extracts from the Scottish pamphlets and sermons of the period. In that respect his industry is great, and for such painstaking work he is to be commended. But as regards

the use that he makes of his ample knowledge of such records, very little can be said in his favour, and a great deal must be said in extreme condemnation. He is unfair; he is spiteful; he is narrow-minded; and he is utterly incapable of taking a broad and dispassionate view of any question, in which important principles of politics or of religion are involved. He has evidently, in this *History of Scotland*, undertaken a task for which mentally he is quite unfit. Had he confined himself to the duties of an annalist, and had he been possessed of a moderate amount of impartiality, and of a moderate ability in his judgment of the importance of historical facts, he might have done some good work for the British people. But as it is, he has given them a view of English and especially of Scottish affairs in the seventeenth century, which is utterly unfair and misleading; and one which, no doubt, some competent historical writer will ere long completely refute and destroy. In the meantime, I propose to do my little share towards such an end by pointing out, chiefly from Mr Lang's own pages, the gross blunders which he has committed, and the utter unfairness with which he treats the action of the Scottish people during the troublous period between 1625 and 1690.

## CHAPTER V.

## MR LANG'S JIBES AT PRESBYTERIANISM.

IN this third volume Mr Lang is not long of showing his hand. Presbyterianism, according to him, is the evil thing :—

“Presbyterian absolutism had invaded every corner of private life . . . its odious cruelties were in contrast with the plain duty of ‘professed followers of the Lamb’” (page 2).

Even the Reformation is not free from the flouts of Mr Lang :—

“The dragon’s teeth, plentifully sown by the Reformation, and by the king himself, were soon to bring forth their crops of armed, contending men. The Reformation had scattered the fatal seed” (page 2).

It would appear, then, that according to the philosophy of Mr Lang, revolutions, whether religious or otherwise, are to be carried through with the aid of rosewater; and contentions, armed or otherwise, are quite unnecessary. In order to excuse the interference of Charles the First and his English counsellors

with the Church of Scotland, Mr Lang cites some remarks made in 1625 by a Reverend Mr Row, a Presbyterian minister, against the marriage of Charles to Queen Henrietta, a Catholic; and a pamphlet, published in 1630, by another Presbyterian minister, in which, according to Mr Lang, whatever evil existed in the world was laid to the charge of the bishops.

“Knobs and wens and bunchy Popish flesh. ‘Down with bishops,’” says Mr Lang, was the burden of Leighton’s appeal to the English Parliament then sitting. ‘Strike neither at great or small, but at these troublers of Israel; smite that Hazael in the fifth rib.’ Already Protestantism,” says Mr Lang, ‘in these voices was appealing, as of old against Cardinal Beaton, to its old weapons the dirk and the sword, and these things were ‘done in the green tree’ long before Laud tried to thrust the Liturgy on Scotland. We see the temper of the godly long before Charles set foot in his native country.”

This is a fair specimen of Mr Lang’s historical insight. Because two more or less obscure Presbyterian ministers in 1625 and 1630, published some silly fanatical remarks, as common in those days and as harmless if left alone, as British political denunciations are at the present day, Mr Lang cites them as being somewhat of an excuse for the subsequent iniquitous interference of Charles and Laud with the religious views of the Scottish people.

“Meanwhile,” continues Mr Lang, “the third party, the Independents, learned or ignorant, sane or insane, were rising, and some were to utter the word of all others most hateful to good men, ‘Toleration’” (page 4).

I give these quotations at some length, as they form the keynote to Mr Lang’s view of the religious struggle in England and Scotland during the seventeenth century. He can see nothing good in Presbyterianism, and very little wrong in Anglicanism. Of the importance of the stand made by the Presbyterians and the other Puritans for civil and religious liberty, he sees little or nothing, and says little or nothing. Sufficient is it for him that the Presbyterians were themselves persecutors, and therefore they must be regarded as enemies to liberty. But the important and vital point of the question, that Presbyterianism, being based not on an ecclesiastical caste, but on popular government, contained therefore within itself the principle of regeneration and the true seed of religious liberty, is quite beyond the purview of Mr Lang. To him apparently the æsthetic element in religion is of more importance than the spiritual; and “surplices, devout attitudes and beauty of services,” more pleasing to the Supreme Being than is the simple devotion of a pure and contrite spirit.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE UPRISING OF THE SCOTTISH NATION.

IN 1638, when the Marquess of Hamilton, acting for Charles, was endeavouring to gain time against the leaders of the Covenant—

“Some 60,000 men and 300 ministers,” says Mr Lang, “met him at Edinburgh. . . . The gentry and nobles stood with swords in their hands, lining the road to the Town Cross.”

This great demonstration against English and kingly interference with the national rights of the Scottish people is highly resented by Mr Lang.

“We sigh,” he writes, “for Cotterell and his handful of Cromwellian musketeers.”

So anti-Scottish is Mr Lang in his favour of Anglicanism, and in his detestation of Presbyterianism, that he sighs for the intervention of a band of Cromwell’s armed sectaries. Probably against such a Scottish gathering, a hundred handfuls of Cotterell’s musketeers would have found it as expedient to temporise as did the Marquess of Hamilton.

Mr Lang feels that he has a hard task before him to defend the cruel and atrocious acts of the "killing time" after the Restoration, so he begins even in 1638 to endeavour to minimise those atrocities by pointing out how intolerant the Covenanters were in these early times. He says (page 44):—

"The Restoration turned preachers out of their parishes, and imposed oaths intolerable. The Restoration did but follow in the path of the Covenant; but popular narrators of these events are not apt to dwell on this circumstance."

No! But there is this great difference between the two cases. In the one, the people almost universally desired to have the preachers; in the other, the king and prelates wanted to force their preachers on the people. Yet Mr Lang ignores, or is blind to this very obvious distinction. So much for the fairness of Mr Lang.

#### CHARLES APPEALS TO FOREIGN POWERS FOR HELP.

In 1640, when the struggle between Charles and his English parliament was about to result in an appeal to arms, Charles was sorely put to it for want of funds.

“Every corner,” says Mr Lang, “was raked for money; threats were held over the city and the merchants in vain. Spain, France, and even (by the Queen) the Pope were supplicated for loans, and supplicated to no avail.”

No doubt these appeals for aid to the Roman Catholic powers and to the Pope got to the knowledge of the opponents of Charles, both in England and Scotland, and tended largely to give a wild and fierce spirit to the extreme men on that side. Mr Lang has no allowance for such a feeling, and when Charles by and bye, meets his fate on the scaffold, Mr Lang regards him as a martyr.

#### THE EXCESSES OF THE ENGLISH SOLDIERY.

We hear so much from Mr Lang of the atrocities perpetrated by the Scots levies during the Civil War, that we should be induced to think, if we did not know the unfairness of our author, that seldom or never was a civil war carried on with such brutal savagery as that exhibited by the Scots. But here we have from Mr Lang, what a portion of the English levies did in the early days of the struggle also, and before the blood of the combatants had become hot and relentless.

“The (English) national temper” (page 72), “overwrought by Laud (who had some thoughts of burning a heretic and had imprisoned many Nonconformists), was in sympathy with the Scots. The northern counties could not be asked to serve again; the pressed men from the southern counties robbed right and left as they marched, burned the communion rails in churches, and in the ardour of their Christianity threatened, and on occasion murdered their Catholic officers.”

Can it be possible that here Mr Lang has made a mistake in his quotation, and that these murderers were not Englishmen, but Covenanting Scots? How strange, also, to find that “the national temper of England” was in sympathy with the Scots, who, Mr Lang would lead us to believe, have all along been in the wrong. Can it be possible that, after all, the Scots in their national movement had just cause for their action? We have the English nation and the Scottish nation on the one side, but then we have Mr Andrew Lang on the other. The question had better, therefore, be regarded as an open one.

## CHAPTER VII.

## MR LANG'S ANTI-SCOTTISH SNEERS.

I HAVE alluded to the narrow views of historical subjects taken by Mr Lang; but if his mental grasp be narrow, it must at least be admitted that he is wide in his antipathies. By this time, no one who has read Mr Lang's third volume with ordinary care will expect to find him giving the Scottish Presbyterians any reasonable exhibition of fairness in his judgment of their actions; but it might have been hoped that in other matters, the Scots as a people would be treated with a reasonable amount of impartiality, and that at all events they would have been free from the sneers he is continually showering on their national faith and their national form of Church government. This is not, however, the case. Even the glorious and wonderful stand made by the Scots against English attempts to deprive them of their national independence, and which, thanks to their bravery and determination, was crowned with success, does not pass without the usual depreciatory jibe from Mr Lang.

"The presence of a Scottish army at Newcastle," he writes (page 80), "... would once have united England in arms. The Scots would have been driven from Tees and Tyne to the Naver, calling on their mountains to cover them."

So writes our latest historian of Scotland; but if this be Mr Lang's reading of the power of England and of the helplessness of Scotland, how comes it that during the "Three Hundred Years' War of Independence" the Scots came successfully out of the struggle? In the end, despite many ups and downs, England had to seek for a union with Mr Lang's much-despised native land. Religious bigotry sometimes takes strange forms. In Mr Lang it extends from his religion to his nationality, and leads him to overlook and misrepresent the plain facts of history.

#### CHARLES NOT FAITHLESS ENOUGH FOR MR LANG.

The great defect of Charles the First was his faithlessness. It was that which ultimately brought him to the block. He played fast and loose with all the political parties of the time, and was true to none except that of extreme Anglicanism. Yet in this great public sin of utter faithlessness, Charles, it



would appear, did not go far enough for Mr Lang. He writes (page 180):—

“In place of saying ‘No’ heartily to the impossible propositions of Parliament, or of accepting them *till changed times enabled him to break his promise*” (the italics are mine), “Charles merely drove time by handsome denying answers.”

It is seldom we find a British author shamelessly propounding, and in a sense advocating, a policy of utter faithlessness on the part of a monarch to his people. Yet Mr Lang seems to regard such a policy as a mere matter of course. The virulent condemnation of the Presbyterians which comes from a mind of this stamp may thus be regarded as a compliment by men of honourable feeling.

MR LANG CONDEMNS THE COVENANT — PROFESSOR GARDINER DEFENDS IT—ITS BENEFITS TO BRITAIN.

“Mr Gardiner says with truth,” writes Mr Lang (page 181), “it is hard to find serious fault with the resolution thus taken” (to take action against the king), “except by condemning the whole ecclesiastical and political system, which the Scottish nation

had deliberately adopted. Well," writes Mr Lang, "we condemn the ecclesiastical system and that monstrous and cruel idol the Covenant."

To this I reply, that in a great national emergency, when the fate of Scotland, and not only of Scotland, but of England also, hung in the balance, the Scottish people, with the co-operation of the ruling party in England, saved the situation by the thorough earnestness which they brought to bear on the crisis. The Solemn League and Covenant, so vigorously denounced by Mr Lang, was the instrument by which the Absolutest designs of Charles and his advisers were frustrated. That its principles and its actions were carried to an extreme, and by and by brought on Scotland many difficulties and much loss and misery, is quite true; but in a time of revolution such evils are hardly to be avoided.

"Not till the majority of a nation," writes Professor Gardiner, "is left undisturbed in its religious or political principles, can it venture to accord freedom to a minority."

Had the balance gone the other way, and had Britain become subject to an absolute monarchy, the subsequent trouble that would have fallen on the British people would most probably have been

infinitely worse than any they suffered during the half-century extending from 1639 to 1689. Who shall say that Britain was not fortunate in her policy of "Thorough" against Absolutism in kingcraft and priestcraft in the seventeenth century, as compared with the fate of France in the close of the eighteenth century?

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE ALLEGED SALE OF KING CHARLES BY  
THE SCOTS.

WHEN Mr Lang comes to the time when the leaders of the Scottish army in England gave up Charles to the English Parliamentary party, he of course takes a most unfavourable view of the affair.

"In brief," he says, "£200,000 were paid down by the English, and the Scots marched home, leaving their king behind. . . . Some promise of the king's safety they had, but they had broken their own assurance to the same effect, and knew what words were worth. The Scots would have incurred less odium in England, and in Europe, if they had taken Charles home, and immured him . . . or beheaded him. . . . It is the £200,000 of blood-money that mark the Scots with eternal infamy. The money was due, and had been voted previously, but was not paid till they filled up the measure of their shame" (page 182).

Then of course follow the usual partisan quotations from the English and French supporters of the Royal cause:

"Traitor . . . Scot. Sold his king for a groat."

And:

*"L'Ecosse, parjure a sa foi.  
Pour un denier, vendit son Roi."*

There is such a thing, as reading into a deed of the present time, the evil that results from it in the future ; and this is what Mr Lang, with his usual unfairness to his own country, has done with reference to this transaction. Had the English authorities, when they arranged with the Scots to take over the person of Charles, openly proclaimed that they required him to be delivered up for the purpose of beheading him, Mr Lang's wild and extreme charges against the Scots would have been justified, but not otherwise. There is no indication, so far as history discloses, that there was a predetermination on the part of the English authorities to take the life of Charles. Such a knowledge is, as I say, falsely and unscrupulously read into the agreement between the authorities of the two armies—Scots and English—by Mr Lang. Charles was the king of England as well as of Scotland, and the English authorities had as much right to the custody of his person as the Scots. Nay, they probably thought that they had a great deal more right, inasmuch as the usual residence of the king of the two kingdoms was in England. That the king was for the time with the Scots, was merely an incident of the war. And that the English should claim to have the possession of his person, as one of the successful results of the

war, was natural enough, and was simply another incident. There was no talk or threat on the part of the English authorities, so far as I know, that extreme measures were to be taken with his Majesty's person; and as Mr Lang does not cite any, it may safely be taken for granted that none of any authority, small or great, can be produced. The Scottish commissioners were quite justified in assuming that the life of Charles would be as safe with the English authorities as it was with the Scots. That the custody of the king's person would give a great political advantage to the side which held him, is incontestable. The history of Scotland contains several instances of this, and of how the contending parties in the state endeavoured to get hold of the person of the king or the heir to the throne. But in no instance was this power used by any political party for the purpose of taking the king's life. Why, then, should the Scots on this occasion be accused of selling the life of their king when they gave him up to the English authorities?

For that substantially is the charge made against them by the unscrupulous and vituperative Mr Lang. The Scots took "blood-money," is his direct charge! "But oh!" says Mr Lang, "they got £200,000—paid down in hard cash for his surrender. "Well," I say,

“what has that got to do with the taking of his life?” Mr Lang admits that the money, and much more, was legally due to the Scottish authorities by the English, and naturally enough the Scots used the advantage they had of holding the king’s person to say, “Well, if you desire to have such an advantage as the possession of the king’s person may give to you, you must first pay your debt to us.” There is, in fact, little or no doubt that the Scots authorities imagined that the English Parliamentary party wished for the possession of the king’s person; not to take his life, for of that there was then no thought whatever; but in order to be able to squeeze out of him advantageous terms, as to the extent of the royal prerogative and of the power of Parliament. The fact that the king was in the hands of the English for a period of over twelve months after he was given up by the Scots, shows pretty clearly that this was the case. During that time, the king was, with his customary faithlessness, playing off one Parliamentary party against the other, in his usual treacherous and shortsighted way. And it was only when his thorough untruthfulness, and his renewal of the Civil War, at last enraged the extremists of the Cromwellian party to fury, that he was seized by them and held as a prisoner of state. This being the case, all these



monstrous and absurd charges made by Mr Lang, that the Scots sold the life of their king for money, fall completely to the ground, and can only be characterised as a disgraceful garbling of the facts of the case. It is, as I have said, the unscrupulous reading into a preliminary agreement some cruel result that proceeds from it, but which never at the time was foreseen, or even contemplated by the supposed offending party; or even by the other party to the agreement.

#### THE SURRENDER NOT THE ACT OF THE SCOTTISH PEOPLE.

There is another point which has to be considered in connection with this much-debated question, viz., the part which the people of Scotland had in the matter of the surrender of Charles. Mr A. Bissett, in his work, *The Struggle for Parliamentary Government in England*, says (vol. ii., page 178):—

“In regard to this transaction, which has been a common topic of reproach against the Scots, whose fault has in general been the other way, serving and suffering for their royal family, not wisely, but too well, instead of selling or betraying them, it has been remarked that it was not the work of the Scottish nation, but of the oligarchy which then ruled Scotland.”

And in a note to the above, Mr Bissett quotes as follows from Carte's *Ormonde* (vol. ii., page 13):—

“The Scottish nation had generally disliked the giving up of His Majesty.”

When Mr Lang deals with the surrender of Charles, he attributes the whole blame of the transaction to the Scottish nation.

“It is the £200,000 of blood-money,” he writes, “that mark the Scots with eternal infamy.”

Such language, to use his own words, “could not be exceeded in violence by the fiercest fish-fag of Edinburgh,” or, let me add, of Oxford! But if the Scots, as a nation, are to be made responsible for what Mr Lang terms the sale of their king for money, what shall be said of the English nation which took his life? Mr Lang, of course, does not put it in that way. When he comes to that point, he writes in quite a different key. He simply says (page 201):—

“On January 30 (1649), Charles I. was murdered in public.”

Murder is a pretty strong term to use in connection with the death of Charles. Historians generally prefer to say that Charles I. was executed. But Mr Lang, in his high Anglican fervour, prefers to

use the word "murder." Well, if Charles was murdered, he was murdered by the then ruling representatives of the English people, and his blood, according to Mr Lang's own style of logic, is therefore on the head of that people. Why, then, does not Mr Lang go into hysterics against a people who "murdered" their sovereign? For if the Scots, as a nation, are guilty, as Mr Lang says, of the sale of Charles for money, there is no escape from the correlative charge, that the English, as a nation, were guilty of what Mr Lang terms his "murder"! It would seem, then, that according to Mr Lang's own showing, the guilt of the Scots nation was to that of the English nation, as a mere shrewd business transaction is to the crime of murder. Such, and no other, is the plain inference from the position as stated by Mr Lang. Into this ridiculous quandary, then, does Mr Lang's anti-Presbyterian and anti-Scottish virulence land him. And yet we are led to suppose that Mr Lang is writing history!

## CHAPTER IX.

MR LANG'S EXCUSES FOR CHARLES—PRESBYTERIAN  
POLITY COMPARATIVELY TOLERANT.

MR LANG does his best to excuse the terrible political blunders of the shiftY and faithless Charles.

"Tudor monarchs," he writes (page 202), "altered creeds at their will, but the fanatics of the Covenant broke with Charles because (among other reasons) he would not consent to alter the creed of England. To do *that*, they held, was right and necessary; to change the Presbyterian forms of Scotland, was the greatest of crimes. This was a crucial example of what, instructed by time, we hold to be the stupidest of superstitions. Charles was intolerant of Catholics, of Presbyterians, and of sects. The Covenanters were intolerant of Catholics, of Episcopacy, and of sects. . . . In an age when all imposed their will, so far as they might, on the consciences of others (which had no right to exist), Charles acted like the rest of mankind."

Just so! It was an age of religious intolerance, and every party in power had tried to enforce its views as far as it could, often with pains and penalties of a very severe character. The Roman Catholics did it in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and the Low Countries, with measures of the most atrocious cruelty, resulting in the death of millions of human beings. The Anglicans did it, with infinitely less severity, but still with great ruthlessness and cruelty. The Presbyterians did it also; but I venture to say

that despite the wild and fanatical quotations by Mr Lang, from the tracts and sermons of the Presbyterian preachers and others, there was far less cruelty practised by them than by the Anglican party. Owing to the greater spread of education among the Presbyterian population than among the Anglicans, there were, as I have already pointed out, more wild notions and fanatical utterances put into print by them, than was the case among the then more ignorant and comparatively docile masses in England. The English as a people, with the exception of the Puritans, were dumb and helpless before the ritualistic innovations of Laud and the High Church party. Does not Mr Lang admit that the Tudor monarchs altered creeds at their will? When the English Stewart kings tried this policy in Scotland, they met with the most determined opposition. That in such opposition the Scots went sometimes to extremes, was what was natural enough under the circumstances. They knew, with a thoroughness of knowledge which did not exist in England, what was being done in Germany; for at least twenty to thirty thousand Scots went over to that country, during the first half of the seventeenth century, to assist their Protestant brethren there. They brought back to Scotland ample news of the exterminating

war that the Roman Catholic armies were carrying on there. The sack of Magdeburg in 1631 must have stirred the Protestant fervour of the Scots to an extreme point, and induced them, high and low, to determine that all tendencies towards the Romanising of their religion should be resisted to the uttermost. Mr Lang, of course, sees nothing and says nothing of this phase of the question. He also sees nothing and says nothing of the all-important fact, that Presbyterianism being a form of religious polity based on democratic principles, contains within itself the germ of regeneration and reform. Mr Lang cites an instance or two of how this spirit of regeneration was showing itself among the more intelligent of the Presbyterian ministers. Thus (page 187) he writes :—

“Despite this temporary ruin, a great step was taken in the direction of civil and religious liberty when the Estates dared to oppose the despotism of the prophets.”

And again (page 189) :—

“There was open war between Kirk and State. As early as March 27 (1648) Baillie had written, ‘I am more and more in the mind, that it were for the good of the world that churchmen did meddle with ecclesiastical matters only; that were they never so able otherwise, they are unhappy statesmen.’”

Thus, evidently, the dawn of a better day was showing itself. And, indeed, this was inevitable. Presbyterianism is not based on theocratic but on democratic principles; and great, as for a time, may

be the power of its ministers, especially in critical and excited times, such as those of Charles the First, they cannot do much, or go far, unless they have their people with them. At the period in question, owing to the perilous position of Protestantism in general, and of Scottish Presbyterianism in particular, its clergy became possessed for a time of almost unlimited power; but at first this was with the full consent of the laity generally. It was a great crisis in the history of Scotland; and as is often the case in a great national crisis, it became necessary to invest a person or a party with extreme power. Hence the Solemn League and Covenant, so much denounced by Mr Lang. It is an undoubted fact that this "band" or union was a great national movement, if ever there was one. Mr Lang, in his thorough ignorance of human nature, as well of great historical movements, can only see the bad features of it—the abuse of power, for a time, by the extremists of the movement. He does not see that this was quite an exceptional development of force in a great national and religious crisis; and that when the danger had passed, Presbyterianism, by the very essence of its constitution, viz., the alliance of the people with the clergy, would assume an orderly and rational attitude towards the Civil Power.



## CHAPTER X.

THE NECESSITY FOR THE SOLEMN LEAGUE  
AND COVENANT.

THAT the Solemn League and Covenant was a great national movement, emanating from the very heart of the Scottish nation, and led by nearly all its nobility and gentry, can be proved by Mr Lang's own pages.

"The country," he says (page 27), "was united. Young Lennox carried to London a supplication from the Lords and gentlemen, with a list of sixty-six other petitions. The Duke could speak to the intense and uniform excitement of the country. The names of the noblemen suppliants by themselves prove the unanimity. From the far north came Sutherland; Fifeshire sent Rothes; for Ayrshire was Cassilis; for the eastern border, Home. There were Lothian, Kinnoul, Wemyss, Dalhousie, Montgomery, Fleming, Lindsay, Elcho, Yester, Sinclair, Loudoun, Balmerino, Burley, Dalziel, Cranstoun, Boyd—men whose fathers had stood on different sides in the wars of Moray and Mary, of church and kirk. . . . In Scotland, nearly all were then Presbyterian."

The above quotation from Mr Lang's own pages shows conclusively, that the Scottish people were nearly as one man against the religious interfer-

ence and anti-Scottish meddling of Charles and his advisers. Then it must be remembered that the Solemn League and Covenant, with some slight amendments, was adopted by both Houses of the Parliament of England, and that even Cromwell signed it. It may safely be said, in the face of these facts, that in the belief of the English and Scottish peoples, the Solemn League and Covenant was a stern necessity of the time. Yet Mr Lang would lead us to believe that all this unanimity of purpose was wrong, and that if only those demented peoples could have seen with Mr Lang's sagacious eyes, they never would have acted as they did. What Charles wanted, was evidently what the Scottish nation was determined not to allow. Archbishop Spottiswoode told Rothes (page 28), "if the king turned Papist, we behoved to obey." That was not the view taken of the situation by the Scottish nobles and the Scottish people; though, presumably, obedience to the policy of Charles was the right course to take, according to Mr Lang. The Scots would then have escaped from the tyranny of the Presbyterian ministers and the yoke of the Solemn League and Covenant. But the Scots, despite the superior wisdom of the modern Mr Lang, believed that a domestic tyranny, established by themselves,

and which they could shake off when they became tired of it, was preferable to a thralldom emanating from London, and enforced on them by a foreign church and a foreign people. In this matter, it is highly probable that the Scottish people knew what for them was right and beneficial, better than the author who now so trippingly condemns them, and endeavours to hold them up to contempt and ridicule.

“PRAISE GOD—BAREBONES, INSTEAD OF  
OLIVER CROMWELL.”

So eager is Mr Lang to find out and denounce the excesses of the Presbyterian General Assembly, that he has neither eye nor ear for any similar excess that may be committed by his belauded Anglican dignitaries. It is the very simple and obvious duty of any one who comes forward to write the history of his native country to be fair towards it, and at least that he should “nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.” But such just and gentle kindness of treatment is not in the nature of Mr Lang. In a blind determination to libel and vituperate anything and everything connected with Scottish Presbyterianism, he is not to be deterred by an utter

ignorance of contemporary history bearing on the period, and on the historical questions with which he has to deal. He has no eye for these, but prefers to rout among the sermons and the chronicles of the more fanatical of the preachers of the Covenant; and when he gets hold of some of their wild and extreme utterances, he points to them with exultation as being true samples of the policy of a great religious and national movement. It is, as if "Praise God—Barebones," and not Oliver Cromwell, were to be put forward as the true representative of the Puritan movement. Such a policy may be effective when addressed to juvenile curates or to unthinking men; but the writer who resorts to it, completely forfeits his claim to be ranked either as a fair-minded writer, or as a trustworthy Scottish historian.

## CHAPTER XI.

MR LANG'S ATROCIOUS ATTACK ON  
PRESBYTERIANISM.

"IF it is desirable to think with precision concerning matters about which nothing is known," writes Mr Lang, "then the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism may be worth what they cost in blood and tears. The results, again, of the New Directory of Public Worship, were, in practice, the increase of 'conceived prayers,' till even the Lord's Prayer fell out of use, and little was to be heard in church except the observations of the minister" (pages 203 and 204).

Now mark the comments of Mr Lang on the above paragraph :—

"*The practical fruits of all these improvements*" (the italics are mine), he writes, "may be observed from the letter of an English soldier in Scotland" (September 1650). "It is usual with the Scots to talk religiously . . . and the very next moment to lie, curse, or swear, without any manner of bounds or limits. . . . The beds in Scotland were filthy, full of fleas and Covenanters"—the English word for lice, explains this dainty and courteous Scottish historian. "The women are dirty and do all look like witches." "To this," Mr Lang goes on to say, "had come the brotherly understanding, and thus did the blasphemous English deride the Covenant. . . . Having

examined the kirk-session books, this observer had documentary evidence to the frequency 'of whoredom and fornication, the common darling sin of this nation.' The poor live—men, women, children, and cattle—in filthy cottages, and can be evicted whenever their lairds are so minded. All this," says Mr Lang with a purpose, "relates to Berwickshire and the Lothians."

And to this I add, also with a purpose, that the remarks of this English gossip must be regarded as including the shires adjacent, viz., Roxburgh, Peebles, and Selkirk, the last of which, I understand, has the honour of having given birth to Mr Lang.

Seldom has a writer of history, or so-called history, made himself more ridiculous, than does Mr. Lang by the preceding quotation. Unable to heap enough libel and infamy on Scotland and Scottish Presbyterianism and its doings, by his own pen, Mr. Lang brings forward a gossiping letter by an English soldier—one of Cromwell's men—chock-full of dirty statements as to the condition—moral and material—of the peasantry in the south-eastern portion of Scotland. And says Mr. Lang :—

"These were the practical fruits of the Westminster Confession, the Shorter Catechism, and the Directory of Public Worship,"

—in other words, "of Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterian doctrines and creed, then and at present," it

may be added. That, unmistakably, is what Mr. Lang's statement means, if it means anything. The charges of this English gossip are widespread. "The Scots lie, curse, and swear," he says. This may be true, "in pairs," like the goodness of the curate's egg. In war time, rough language is not uncommon; and even English soldiers, half a century or so later, "swore terribly in Flanders." Scotsmen may rest easy under a charge like this; for at the worst, it is highly probable they were no worse, if they were no better, than their neighbours.

"The beds were filthy, full of fleas and Covenanters"—the English word for lice, says the dainty writing Mr. Lang, "and the women do all look like witches. For the sins of adultery and fornication, they are as common among them as if there was no commandment against either."

So quotes Mr. Lang from his English gossip. And this was the result, or rather one of the results, according to this delicate-minded historian, of the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism!

#### THESE EVILS CAUSED BY ENGLISH AGGRESSION.

Assuming for the sake of argument that these allegations are mainly true; and seeing the hostile and prejudiced character of the witness, that is a

pretty strong assumption ; it may surprise Mr. Lang to hear that this plague "of fleas and lice" had no more connection with these doctrinal supports of Presbyterianism, than it had with the Thirty-Nine Articles, or the Book of Common Prayer. Indeed, I shall show in a subsequent chapter, these Anglican standards may have had something to do with them, but that Presbyterianism by no possibility could have. In reality, the true cause of this condition of Scottish uncleanly habits, so far as they existed in the Scottish, and I may also say English, Border districts, was primarily due to England. For about three hundred years, owing to the constant attempts made by England to subdue Scotland, the Scottish southern counties, from Forth to Tweed, were made practically a waste, so that the English invaders should get no supplies from the country as they advanced. There were no towns of any consequence ; and no fortresses from Edinburgh to the Cheviots. The gentry lived in peels, or square towers, which could not be burned ; the poor people, as Mr. Lang's gossip says, "in filthy cottages," which could be. When the English made a raid, the peels were defended if it was a small one, and abandoned if it was a great one. And in either case, the cattle and other stock were driven to the fastnesses among

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the hills ; and the villages were abandoned. When the raid was over, the peasants returned to find their cottages roofless and desolate, and everything destroyed that it was possible to destroy. Southern Scotland, in fact, was for about three centuries in a constant state of siege, owing to English greed and English ambition. A people, living for nine or ten generations under such conditions, lived only for war. Industry, except of the most necessary kind, was impossible ; and cleanliness was equally impossible. The decencies of life had to be discarded, as if they were unattainable luxuries ; and the usual concomitants of dirt and filth, and constant danger to liberty and life—viz., fleas and lice, were no doubt prevalent ; as they always are with soldiers in a campaign, where cleanliness is impossible. In the Crimea, even the officers of the British Guards and of other regiments, as well as the rank and file, were crawling with vermin. And so also, in the Boer war in South Africa a few years ago. Mr. Lang, whose knowledge of life and of human nature generally, seems to be that of a third-rate monk in a third-rate monastery, seems to have no conception of such a condition of things ; but nevertheless they existed, and still exist. “The fleas,” then, and “the Covenanters,” which Mr. Lang attributes so jauntily to the

Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism, and which no doubt afflicted generations of Mr. Lang's ancestors, as well as many better and worse folk, were proofs of the supreme excellence and indomitable resolution of the Scottish people in that much-troubled southern territory. Rather than give the English invaders any advantage which might lead to conquest, these Scots decided, generation after generation, to make their country an utter waste, whatever might be the unpleasant results to their bodily condition. Archbishop Magee once said that he would prefer to have a people drunken but free, rather than sober but slaves. And the Archbishop was right in his philosophy. An enforced virtue, a virtue which is the result of slavery, is no true virtue; and nothing high in the way of moral elevation or improvement can result from such a condition of life. With liberty, everything is possible, if the race that enjoys it is worth anything. These filthy Scots, then, of Mr. Lang, and whom he marks down for his silly and shameless censure, were of an infinitely more noble character than their degenerate descendant. They preferred to be "lousy and free," rather than to be "cleanly and conquered." Mr. Lang will, of course, say that in the middle of the seventeenth century, there had been peace between England and

Scotland for at least two generations. But national habits which have been enforced by stern conditions of life, extending over several centuries, are not changed, like those of soldiers returning from a campaign. Besides, there had been continuous war in Scotland from 1640 to 1650. In the present day, and for two centuries back, the Scottish people in the districts which Mr. Lang makes the seat of his dirty libel, have been probably the finest peasantry in the British Isles ; indeed, it may be fairly said, in the world. And yet, during that time, they still remained true, almost universally, to the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism. Indeed, many of them, and many other shrewd judges of national character as well, have not hesitated to affirm that to these two doctrinal strongholds of Scottish Presbyterianism, much of the excellence and superiority of their national character is justly due.

So much, then, from a historcial point of view, for these filthy charges by this English soldier against the Scottish people between Forth and Tweed. I have dealt with them from such a standpoint, because it is a very common belief among Englishmen that the Scots, before the Union, were a race of unmitigated barbarians, who owe all their advancement in modern times to their connection with Englishmen ;

while the real truth is, that they owe all their backwardness before the Union to their contact with Englishmen. It was England that, by her greed of conquest, kept Scotland back before 1600; not England that has lifted Scotland onward since that date. I have shown in this chapter, I think, clearly enough, to every fair-minded reader, whether Scots or English, that the backwardness of Scottish civilisation before the Union was not due to any inherent defect in the Scots as a race. Their subsequent career conclusively proves the truth of this view. Wherever a Scot now meets an Englishman in the field of friendly rivalry within the bounds of the British Empire, in three cases out of four it is not the Scot who is found to be the worse man. The Union, no doubt, has been of immense benefit to both countries; but while England has lost nothing in any shape, but has gained all round, Scotland has suffered seriously in the matter of national honour and national sentiment; and even materially, has far from received all that she is entitled to, were the scales of justice held by an impartial hand.

## CHAPTER XII.

PRESBYTERIANISM *VERSUS* EPISCOPACY.

THE charges of immorality brought against the Southern Scots by this Cromwellian soldier, Mr. Lang, as a matter of course, takes care to elaborate.

“As to ordinary moral offences,” he writes, “sixty people accused of these were brought before the English Commissioners in one day, most of them for facts done divers years since, and the chief proof against them was their own confession before the kirk. . . . Some of the facts were committed five, six, ten, nay, twenty years ago” (page 205).

Taking Mr Lang’s own statement of the position, there is very little in this charge of gross immorality. Sixty cases, extending over a period of twenty years, do not show a high average of immorality ; and they at least show that the offenders had very tender consciences,—an excellent sign in a people.

I have in the preceding chapter dealt with Mr Lang’s outrageous attack on Presbyterianism from a historical standpoint. I will now deal with it from a chronological one, and show the superficial and blundering character of these charges, when we subject them to a close scrutiny. This letter, it will be observed, is stated by Mr Lang to be of date

“September 1650.” Now the Shorter Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith came to Scotland from England. They were the composition chiefly of English Presbyterian divines, assisted by four or five ministers from Scotland. At what time, then, did these two important doctrinal documents reach Scotland? On this important point, Mr. Lang is evidently in a state of utter ignorance. The facts are, however, easily to be had by any writer, who, unlike Mr Lang, wishes to be accurate and just. The Shorter Catechism, then, was completed, and presented to the English Parliament on the 26th November 1647, and ordered to be printed on the 16th April 1648. It was adopted by the Scottish General Assembly on the 28th July 1648, and ratified by the Scottish Parliament on the 7th September 1649. As regards the others, the Directory for Public Worship was submitted to the English Parliament in April 1643; and between the 1st October and the 26th November 1646, the Confession of Faith. These are the doctrinal standards of Scottish Presbyterianism—then and at present—to which Mr Lang attributes such a filthy condition of Scottish life, and such a shocking state of Scottish morals in 1650. At that date, it is clear that they could not have been generally known in Scotland, and certainly

they could have had no influence on the personal condition of the people, whether as regards "fleas, or lice, or dirty faces." As regards the acts of immorality committed, "five, six, ten, or twenty years" before 1650—thus going back to 1630—and for which Mr Lang also makes the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism responsible, how does he manage it, or what does he really mean? These two documents have no doubt had an important influence on the religious training of the Scottish commonalty for many generations; but it has remained for a historian of the calibre of Mr Lang, to suggest that morally, or rather immorally, they could work backwards, and so affect injuriously the virtue of the Scottish peasantry, for five or ten years, before they became known in Scotland. Here, it is only too evident, that Mr Lang, in digging a pit into which he intended to thrust Presbyterianism with all the forms of infamy and degradation, has in reality, as in the case of the alleged sale of Charles the First, tumbled into it himself, dragging along with him his beloved Episcopacy, in somewhat of a bemired condition. For Episcopacy, until 1638, however ineffective, was the law of the land in Scotland; and if the morals of the Scottish people at that time were not as they should have been, certainly Episcopacy,

and not the Westminster Confession, should bear the blame. No doubt, the historic mind of Mr. Lang—rather wandering even when at its best—must here have been dwelling on the shocking state of morality at the English Court after the Restoration. Then Episcopacy became re-established in England. From 1630 to 1638, it was also the law of the land in Scotland. Is it, then, unreasonable to suggest, or to suppose, that in this matter Mr Lang's historic sense has got somewhat bemuddled; and that in attributing to Presbyterianism "the ordinary moral offences," committed in Scotland, according to his Cromwellian gossip, from 1630 to 1640, he really meant to lay the blame on Episcopacy? Mr Lang blunders so seriously and so often when he is dealing with Presbyterianism, that it can hardly be regarded as uncharitable to assume that for once he has also made a most ludicrous blunder in dealing with Episcopacy!

#### MR LANG'S ATTACK ON HIS ANCESTORS.

But if these charges are, as Mr Lang evidently wishes them to be regarded, a true statement of the social and moral condition at that time of the Scots in southern Scotland, what is to be said of the Lang ancestry, male and female? Mr Lang gossips so



far, (note at page 279), as to inform his readers that he had a fifth or sixth great-grandmother in Teviotdale, adjoining the district so foully spoken of by this unknown Cromwellian soldier. From his note we gather that she, even in the early part of the eighteenth century, was under the influence of the Presbyterian form of religion. Was she, then, and the earlier female ancestors of Mr Lang, "dirty;" and did "they all look like witches"? And further, did they or their male connections, or any of them, play ducks and drakes with the seventh commandment? Oh, Mr Lang! Mr Lang! In thy intense hatred of the faith of thy seventeenth century countrymen, and in thy anxiety to pander to the lowest form of Oxford bigotry, thou surely hast covered thyself with unlooked-for infamy? Why dost thou foul thine own nest? Why dost thou besmirch the virtue of thy male and female ancestors? Is it from an eager desire from thy high moral standpoint, to point out to an Anglican world of deriders and scoffers of Presbyterianism, the practical fruits of the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism? Surely thy Anglican bigotry has this time most foully run away with thee! But as regards this matter, Mr Lang had perhaps better be left to the tender mercies of the Lang family!

## CHAPTER XIII.

MR LANG REALLY ATTACKS PRESBYTERIAN CREEDS  
OF THE PRESENT DAY.

SO much for the somewhat ludicrous aspect of this question and the ridicule Mr Lang brings upon himself, due, it may be said, to his own shortsighted folly. But there is a more severe and serious side to it, and it is one which cannot and must not be passed over. If there is one canon of courtesy which in these days is universally observed amongst gentlemen, it is that no one shall be reproached or sneered at on account of his creed, or for his want of one. When a religious discussion arises among men of culture and of good feeling, there is the greatest care taken that it shall be carried on in a manner that shall not arouse a gross sense of unfairness or disgust. Mr Lang has rudely, and even brutally broken through this salutary rule of courtesy and fairplay. So utterly devoid does he seem to be of the most ordinary instinct of gentlemanliness, that

judging some of the extreme opinions of the Presbyterian bigots of the seventeenth century by the standard of the present time, he writes of their foolish ravings as if they truly represented the opinions of the Scottish people. Now, without going into a minute discussion of the merits of the various Christian creeds, I hold it to be an undoubted truth, that the actions of the Presbyterians in the seventeenth century will compare not unfavourably with those of any of the leading Christian churches of the period. And as regards Presbyterian doctrines and Presbyterian polity, which Mr Lang so unsparingly denounces, what is their position in these days? The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism are still the doctrinal standards of the Church of Scotland and of her allied churches. Modern criticism and the advance of modern thought show pretty clearly to all intelligent Presbyterians that a remodelling of these standards is necessary. But mark the pre-eminent excellence of Presbyterian polity! It is not fixed and unchangeable, except by the priesthood, as with some churches that need not be mentioned; but it is, on the contrary, flexible and obedient to the law of human progress. For it is the glory and prime merit of Presbyterianism, that her standards are not subject to the despotism of a

hierarchy, but are open to revision and amendment by the Presbyterian people. And this I think I may safely say without fear of contradiction, that there is no great Christian church whose members are more capable of carrying out in these days such a momentous task ; and by their trained religious intelligence are more prepared to do it, than are the Scottish Presbyterians and their allied brethren throughout Christendom. And yet, this is the body of Christians on whose faith Mr Lang has made an attack unexampled, I venture to say, in these days, in its shamelessness. Mr Lang, in this matter, has placed himself altogether outside the bounds of gentlemanly, as well as of Christian courtesy. It is not worth while to look to him for the *amende honorable*. But it is to be hoped that in future editions of Mr Lang's history, if it ever attains such distinction, which is doubtful, his low and vulgar diatribes against Scottish Presbyterianism will be expurgated, and that thus some atonement will be made for the outrage, which has been perpetrated on the national faith of the Scottish people.

THE PEOPLE IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND  
COMPARED.

To pass an opinion, and especially to pass a censure on the morals of a nation, is always a very ticklish question ; but I think I may venture to say that it is exceedingly unlikely that the morality of the English people in the middle of the seventeenth century was any better, if indeed it was as good, as that of the Scottish people. From what we learn of the English clergy a little later than this—say after the Restoration—there can, I think, be no doubt that the strict discipline maintained by the Scottish ministers over their flocks was not then exercised in England. There, the clergy were more likely to browse with the herd, than to subject them to a course of salutary discipline. When the Reformation began in Scotland, the Scots were one of the most fierce, lawless, and turbulent people in Europe. For a century and a half the Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian ministers were earnestly engaged in curbing their fierce passions, and in establishing among them, greater regard to the law and to the moral code. Mr Gardiner is of opinion that the action of the Presbyteries “abated the excesses of

the fierce ruffians, who in the sixteenth century had reddened the country with the feuds of noble houses, and of the rude peasants who wallowed in impurity." In their efforts to curb the passions of their people, the ministers, no doubt, were often very inquisitive and very tyrannical in their manner of enforcing moral discipline in their parishes. And of this feature of their action, Mr Lang is unsparing in his censure. He seems to think that the Scottish people were to be reformed, and brought to a higher state of civilisation, by a proper administration of High Anglicanism and rosewater. Such a course may have been very suitable for a people like the English, whose form of religion their monarchs could, at that time, change at their royal pleasure. But the Scots were not to be moulded in that easy way; and that they were not; and that they obstinately, and even fiercely resisted such attempted changes on the part of their kings and their advisers, is highly to their credit. Mr Lang thinks otherwise, and because the Scots, in their resistance to kingly and ecclesiastical tyranny, often went to extremes, pours upon them the vials of his extreme wrath and indignation. It will, however, I think, be conceded by most impartial observers who possess, unlike Mr Lang, the faculty of seeing both sides of a question, that in that great

religious welter which pervaded Central and Western Europe during the seventeenth century, the Scottish people, on the whole, did their part nobly and well. They, no doubt, went to extremes on many occasions ; but their extremes were mildness itself, compared with the actions, at that time, of the Roman Catholic authorities in Spain, Italy, Germany, and France. And as regards the doings of the Anglican party in Britain, whether we refer to England, Scotland, or Ireland, I maintain that the Scottish Presbyterian party was more moderate and more merciful in their action. Above all, their principle of Church government, being dependent on the consent of the people, was of a character that was infinitely more likely, in the near or far future, to lead to the true solution of that most difficult question of government—the attitude or relation of the Church to the State. In countries where the Episcopal form of Church government is the law of the land, and is conjoined with the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, the inevitable tendency of ecclesiasticism is to endeavour to place the Church above the State. Under the Presbyterian form of Church government, this tendency is neutralised and rendered harmless, because in the Presbyterian Church all power springs from, and is thoroughly dependent on the people ; and in these days, that is the State.

## THE CRUELITIES OF THE ANGLICAN PARTY.

Among the other instances of the tender mercies of the Government towards the Presbyterians, may be included that chronicled by Mr Lang as follows (page 322):—

“Parliament sat in July to August 1670, and passed ‘a clanking Act,’ by which holders of field conventicles were to be punished by death.”

Of this atrocious Act we do not find Mr Lang burst into reproaches or exclamations about “ravens (Anglican) not yet gorged with gore.” Such terms he reserves for the much milder fanatical outbursts of the Presbyterian extremists. But he goes on to say:—

“Morton’s prophecy, made a century earlier, was to be fulfilled—namely, that there never would be peace in Scotland till some ministers were hanged”!

But it would appear, according to Mr Lang, that the orderly and right-doing Anglican Government did not confine its very tender mercies to the bodies of the despised Presbyterians.”

“They,” *i.e.* a portion of the Presbyterian party, “rejoice in the arrival of the princely and clement Monmouth (much relied on by Protestants; while



Jesuits, and innocent men like Hill, Berry, and Green, were being hanged in England").

So writes Mr Lang; and thus it would appear that the "being gorged with gore" is a term as applicable to the Anglican party as to the Presbyterian party, if not a great deal more so; though Mr Lang takes care to avoid such ferocious language when he alludes to the atrocities perpetrated by what may properly be termed his own side.

## CHAPTER XIV.

MR LANG'S IGNORANCE OF PRESBYTERIAN  
POLITY—ITS LIBERALITY.

MR LANG'S inability to understand the true spirit of the Presbyterian form of Church government is continually cropping up in the course of his narrative; and every now and then he denounces it for claims and pretensions which are much more applicable to his own Church, and infinitely more so to that Church (the Roman Catholic) to which an important section of the Anglicans are in these days closely approximating in practice and in polity. Thus (page 364) he writes :—

“In a last document, Cargill, like John Gibb, denounced ‘the ministers of Scotland,’ ‘how have they betrayed Christ’s interest, and beguiled souls.’ Unluckily this interest” (continues Mr Lang), “as understood by Knox, Andrew Melville, and Cargill, seems to be incompatible with the existence of human society; and the extreme Presbyterian view throughout, had been the cause of the miseries of a century.”

So writes Mr Lang, with his usual narrowness of view. He does not see that as the strength of the

Presbyterian Church does not depend upon a hierarchy, but upon the popular will, its interest is not, and moreover cannot be incompatible with the existence of human society. On the contrary, it is inextricably bound up with it and is part of its very life. And it has this saving virtue, more than any other of the great national Churches, that as public opinion in the matter of religion broadens and becomes liberalised, so Presbyterian Church views go hand in hand with the liberalisation of thought, and become as free as the most enlightened civil authorities can require or desire. The ecclesiastical clothes of Presbyterianism, in fact, are made suitable for the wearers at each stage of their growth or development. Those of the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, and to a great extent, though not quite so rigidly, at least as yet, those of the Anglican Church, are like a coat of mail, which cannot be altered, and which must be worn from generation to generation, whether or not they fit the body of the wearer. The form, in fact, is made to repress or govern the spirit. In Presbyterianism, the spirit is allowed to influence and guide the form. Therein lies the true and abiding virtue of Presbyterianism—that form of Church government adopted by the sagacity and far-sightedness of the Scottish people.

It is based on a sound and ever-living principle, and despite the meant-to-be-deadly and destructive denunciations of it by Mr Andrew Lang, it will continue to increase and strengthen with the spread of human knowledge, and with the widening influence of that spirit of philosophic tolerance which is now beginning to pervade all those churches which reject the dogma of Apostolic Succession.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE DROWNING OF TWO WOMEN—MR LANG'S  
CAUSISTRY.

IN 1685, two women, Margaret M'Laughlan, aged sixty-three, and Margaret Wilson, aged eighteen, were drowned near Wigtown in Galloway, apparently because they had not complied, or would not comply, with a certain form of abjuration which the Government then endeavoured to impose upon all Lowland Scots, male or female. The drowning of these two women, which at one time was vehemently denied by some of the writers on the Anglican side, is now fully acknowledged by all reputable authorities. Mr Lang even owns to it, and (page 388) describes it as "an abominable crime." Then he goes on to say:—

"Some facts cannot be disputed. First, the horror of a crime that would soil 'the calendar of hell'; next, the courage which places Margaret Wilson in the white sisterhood of Jeanne d'Arc; and finally, the infamy of the fanatic preachers or leaders, who lured children into the wilderness to entangle them with sophistries rejected by the honourable Presbyterians of Scotland."

Thus writes Mr Lang in his own peculiar style of reckless denunciation. He says these young people "were lured into the wilderness"; but there is no proof of this whatever. On the contrary, the contemporary evidence is all the other way. These poor children were not "lured into the wilderness by the fanatic preachers," but were driven into it by the cruel and savage persecutors of the Government. It is a fashion with writers of Mr Lang's stamp, to decry Wodrow as a chronicler of the events of that period; but he is a writer who would not knowingly depart from the truth. His narrative of the Wilson episode is so simple and so candid, that it would require a great deal of very strong evidence on the other side to break it down. He writes:—

"Gilbert Wilson was every way conform to Episcopacy; and his wife, without anything to be objected against her, as to her regularity. They were in good circumstances as to the world, and had a great stock upon a good ground, and therefore were the fitter prey for the persecutors, if they could reach them. Their children, to be sure, not for their education, but a better principle, would by no means conform or hear the Episcopal incumbent. This was a good handle to the persecutors; so they were searched for, but fled to the hills, bogs, and caves; though they were yet scarce of the age that made them obnoxious to the law. Meanwhile their parents are charged at the highest peril not to harbour them, supply them, or speak to them, or see them, without informing

against them, that they might be taken ; and their father was fined for his children's alleged irregularities and opinions, which he had no share in, and harassed by frequent quarterings of the soldiers, sometimes a hundred of them, upon him at once, who lived at discretion upon anything in the house or field belonging to him. These troubles continuing upon him for some years together . . . with other harassings brought him under exceeding great losses. . . . His son is now living, and is ready to attest all I am writing. . . . In the beginning of this year—1685—these two sisters were obliged to abscond and wander through Carrick, Galloway and Nithsdale with their brothers and some others" (Wodrow, vol. iv., pages 246 and 247).

Such is Wodrow's simple and evidently truthful narrative of this notorious episode. It is not merely different from, but totally opposed to, Mr Lang's statement. If there were not several other instances of Mr Lang's reckless disregard of fairness and candour in this third volume of his history, I might be inclined to say that here he had omitted to read what Wodrow says, and was therefore merely careless. But I do not see that even this plea can be urged on his behalf. These young Wilsons, evidently moved by that pity and sympathy for the persecuted, which the Almighty often implants in young and innocent minds, had become imbued with their religious sentiments, and were prepared to suffer and undergo all manner of hardships rather than "con-

form." Such was *then* the sturdy character of these Scots of Galloway; all honour be to them for it. The elder girl, who was of a heroic mould, evidently led and influenced the two younger ones. The manner in which she met her cruel death shows her also to have been not merely steadfast, but intelligent in her faith. Mr Lang's denunciation of "fanatic preachers" for "luring" these young people to the wilds is thus not based on the facts.

But even had Mr Lang's highly-strung charge been true, that Margaret Wilson and her brother and sister had been influenced by the preachers of the period, and had been "lured by them" into the wilderness, he apparently does not see that there was nothing remarkable or discreditable in such action. What he denounces thus so fiercely, is the kind of work by which in the early stages of Christianity people were converted to the faith. It must also be in these days a large part of the work of missionaries of all denominations; and moreover, it is a work which in a less creditable way is largely adopted in England by some of the clergymen of the Anglican Church, who glory in their success if they can "lure" or in any way influence or induce the children of English Nonconformists to abandon the faith of their parents and to join the Church of England. Mr Lang never



thinks of looking at this side of the question ; he can only see his own. And so determined is he to condemn the poor hunted Covenanters, and so eager is he to excuse their persecutors, that he writes (page 390) :—

“They” (the Covenanting people) “were shot down in the fields of Galloway, and the south-west corner of Scotland, for the sake of consciences perplexed by Cameronian casuistry. Their blood is on the head of the casuists as well as of the Council.”

This is a very violent attack on casuistry by a very violent and extreme casuist ; and if we examine it closely, it is neither more nor less than a casuistical defence of murderous tyranny. According to this modern advocate of the policy of persecution, the play of mind upon mind, the influence of the strong mind upon weaker ones—the only method of true social and moral progress, in fact, which the Almighty has bestowed upon the human race—is as cruel and iniquitous in practice as was the barbarous execution of pious and God-fearing peasants by the Anglican authorities in the south-west of Scotland. Mr Lang must personally be devoid of logical perception, or he must imagine his readers to be so, otherwise he never would have penned such an absurd statement. It is in itself, as I have said, a very characteristic bit of casuistry, but it is casuistry which is too obvious

to mislead an intelligent public. Mr Lang should take his casuistic abilities to Russia, and place them at the disposal of M. Pobiedonostzeff, the Procurator of the Holy Synod. They might be used there with effect on the benighted peasantry of that unhappy land, but they are useless in any country where there is even elementary education.

### THE CRUELITIES OF "THE KILLING TIME."

That there can be no mistake as to the cruel and bloodthirsty policy of the Government against the Covenanters, we have only to refer to Mr Lang's own pages; for unscrupulous as he may be in some respects, he is industrious and painstaking, as becomes an annalist, in giving copious quotations from the chronicles of the period. He writes (page 391):—

"An Act was passed inflicting on witnesses who refused to depone as to the treason and conventicles, the punishment due to those who were actually guilty. . . . Owing of the Covenants was made treasonable. . . . Husbands were made liable for the fines of their pious wives, and all preachers and hearers at conventicles were decreed punishable by death and confiscation."

Such were the cruel laws which drove the poor Presbyterian population of the south-west of Scotland to desperation. Thus, when some of them

contravened these brutal and barbarous laws—worthy of the Spanish Inquisition—they were shot down without mercy, like John Brown of Priesthill, in the presence of his wife. Mr Lang of course endeavours to minimise this Anglican atrocity.

“The shooting was well within the terms of the Act of Council,” writes Mr Lang (page 386).

No doubt. So also were the atrocities of Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition! They also were within the law of Spain! There are no acts of cruelty or of oppression but could easily be justified, if such a method of justification were to be accepted by the verdict of history. Despots would only have to make laws so extreme and so iniquitous that it would be impossible for any man of spirit or of intelligence to obey them, and then they would be safe from reproach if they shot those who transgressed them. But it is the mental misfortune of Mr Lang that he cannot see the miserable shallowness of such a plea as this which he advances for the cruel killing of John Brown. It would seem, indeed, that Mr Lang has been born three or four centuries too late. As a specious defender and apologist for the cruelties of Alva in the Netherlands, or for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, he would doubtless have been the right

man in the right place ; but as an apologist for the awful cruelties exercised against the poor hunted peasantry of south-western Scotland during "the killing time," he is, in these days, most notably out of place.

The opinion of modern publicists regarding these cruel persecutions, has been voiced by an English writer (Mr Osmund Airey), so tersely and so emphatically that it cannot well be excelled :—

"From Lauderdale's marriage (1672) with Lady Dysart until 1687, there ensued a policy of extermination, borne with marvellous fortitude. . . . Want of space prevents us from giving even the names of a series of acts which would disgrace any nation, however barbarous, in any age, however intolerant, and under which, it is asserted with great probability, 18,000 persons died" (*Encyclopæda Britannica*, vol. xix., pages 683 and 684).

Mr Airey is an English gentleman (of Trinity College, Cambridge), and editor of "The Lauderdale Letters," so that he is an authority on the troublous period of "the killing time." It will be seen that his view of the proceedings of the Anglican Government of Scotland during the period in question is as different from that of Mr Lang, as light is from darkness. I leave Mr Lang to fight the question out with Mr Airey. Of the verdict of the British public on the issue, I think that there will be nine out of ten on the side of Mr Airey.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## MR LANG'S DIATRIBE AGAINST PRESBYTERIANS.

AFTER the furious denunciations of the intolerance of the Scottish Presbyterians with which this volume of Mr Lang's history abounds, it is somewhat curious to come across this admission from his pen:—

“Real toleration in those days was not in the range of practical politics; persecution must be practised on the line of least resistance. The Episcopalians were soon to suffer in their turn, as the wheel of fortune revolved” (page 409).

It is somewhat late in the day for Mr Lang to discover this interesting and remarkable feature of the period, with which as a historian he has to deal. When he is narrating the actions of the Scottish people during the exciting times before and after the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, no language is too foul or too furious for his vitriolic pen. The Presbyterian preachers are ‘rowpin ravens’ (quotation). “These ravens were not yet gorged with gore.” “Another saint then stabbed the dead

Archbishop." "England, too, for a season was to be under the heels of the Presbyterian saints." "These wolves," referring to the committee of the army and the kirk. "These Scots." "Pragmatical and provoking Lowland way." "Pious murder." "Thus the saints were divided among themselves." Such are some of the remarks he makes about the Scottish ministers and the Scottish people in the course of his unscrupulous narrative. When we consider the state of religious welter that Central and Western Europe was in at that momentous period, and that the lives and liberties of the Protestant peoples, and even the very existence of the Protestant nations were at stake, owing to the determined attempt being made on the Continent to destroy Protestantism, we should have thought it became the duty of a modern Protestant historian to bear this in mind, and to make allowance for the existence of a strongly-excited national feeling in Scotland. Mr Lang has not the fairness of mind to do this. He writes against the Scottish people as a whole, and their ministers in particular, as if they were simply a set of rogues and murderers. It is only when he gets near the end of his volume, when he has had to narrate in page after page, details of brutal atrocities perpetrated by the Episcopalian

or Anglican \* Government of the Restoration, that we find such a qualification of the sins of the period as that which I have quoted at the beginning of this paragraph. Then, at page 413, we have, presumably as an excuse for the deceit and double-dealing of James the Second and his supporters, the following from Mr Lang :—

“As is common in political affairs, each side was indifferent to honesty and honour,”

—a reflection, let me say, which naturally leads a Scottish reader to remark that this present incursion of Mr Lang into the domain of politics—even of the seventeenth century—has not left him clear and undefiled. “An indifference to honesty and honour” on the part of Mr Lang, so far as regards the actions of the Scots and Scottish Presbyterians during the seventeenth century, may, I think, be regarded as the verdict which many impartial readers will give of this portion of his so-called history.

\* I use the term “Anglican” Government as applicable to the Government of Scotland after the Restoration, as it was entirely under the influence of the Anglican or Episcopal Church.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## PRESBYTERIANISM AND EPISCOPACY.

I HAVE endeavoured to avoid religious controversy in my review of Mr Lang's ill-considered and reckless statements against the national faith of the Scottish people. I do not intend to begin such a controversy now; but before concluding this paper, I may be allowed to make a few general observations on the relations that subsisted between the Presbyterian Church and the State in the troublous period with which Mr Lang's third volume chiefly deals.

Mr Lang states and re-states that Presbyterianism, as it existed in Scotland in the time of the Solemn League and Covenant, was inconsistent with the government of the State; and that it was not, as he elegantly puts it, "till its fangs were drawn" at the Revolution, that the government of Scotland by the civil power became possible. This is a complete travesty of the relation that Presbyterianism bore to the government of Scotland. The leading and powerful position held by the Scottish Presbyterian ministers during the contest with the government of



Charles the First was an exceptional position, and was due to the fact, as I have previously pointed out, that in a crisis where the dearest and highest interests of the nation were at stake, supreme power had to be exercised by some controlling body, and the ministers or clergy were then the only class that the people could trust. A large portion of the nobility, if left uncontrolled, was selfish, and could not be trusted. Their own class interests they regarded as of higher importance than the interests of the nation. On the other hand, the Presbyterian clergy, though they might be narrow-minded and fanatical, were thoroughly identified with the people, and on the great issue could be, and were sure to be, subjected to popular influence and control. To them, then, naturally fell the power, which, in order to check Charles and his Anglican advisers, had to be conferred on some powerful and central organisation. For some time, partly in order to defend their own material interests, the nobility worked in unison with the clergy; and so long as this union lasted, the nation may be said to have been practically unanimous. This being the case, some of the more extreme men among the ministers got intoxicated with their newly-found power, and began to write and talk in a wild and fanatical way, and—like Mr Lang—so to speak,

to lose their heads. This, though to be expected under the circumstances, was quite an exceptional state of affairs, resulting from inexperienced and unpractical men finding themselves for a time among the leaders of the nation. But though the ministers, through the Solemn League and Covenant, thus controlled the government of Scotland in a most complete and thorough fashion, they never for any time could be described as forming a theocracy. A theocracy bases its power on purely religious principles. It appeals to the supernatural and not to the political side of humanity. History shows that this is the tendency of all ecclesiastical bodies, which do not closely associate themselves with the people. If the government of a Church is left entirely to ecclesiastics, the almost inevitable result is that they will endeavour to base their power on mystery; on the mystic ideas which mankind bear towards the Great Unknown; and of which they — the ecclesiastics — gradually assume to themselves, the sole and exclusive interpretation. They naturally do so, because in dealing with the Unknown, there can be no real check imposed upon their pretensions or claims to power. If they can get their followers to believe that they, and they only, have a true knowledge of and influence with the Great Power, which has created,

and which rules the universe, then in their hands is placed the greatest of all human influences. Before such an influence, in nations not yet intelligent and enlightened, the material power of the mightiest ruler must pale and fade away. When confronted with the spiritual power of a Hildebrand, the greatest of European monarchs of the time had to bow the knee. Such is the lesson that history teaches us.

When such a power is thoroughly established, then we have a real and pure theocracy. The priesthood becomes the only mediator between their followers and the Supreme Being; and so then follows, step by step, the claim to the entire control of what is called faith and morals. In other words, if the ignorance or the pliability of the nation will allow it, the claim becomes one, to control the human race in all its relations, whether spiritual or material. Now this is a claim which in Europe was firmly established by the Popes during the Middle Ages, but which was broken by the religious revolt of the northern peoples at the time of the Reformation. It was the aim of the leaders of Protestantism to check, and, if possible, to destroy these extreme pretensions of the Papal power; and to a large extent they succeeded. But it was only after a desperate struggle, extending down to the period with which

Mr Lang deals in this portion of his history. If there was one people, more than another, that did this work thoroughly, it was the Scottish people. Perseveringly, clearly, and resolutely they held in view, as the great end of their efforts in religious reform, the idea, that in the management of their religion, that is, of their national Church, they, the Scottish people, should have complete control. The ministers were to be elected by the Church members in each parish. And as a further check on the ecclesiastical spirit, which quickly seizes any body of clergy if left to themselves, the ministers were to be associated in the government of the Church, with an equal number of ruling elders, who were also elected by the Church members of each parish. Thus, the government of the Presbyterian Church was based on the people, and on the people only.

On this fundamental principle the Presbyterian polity is firmly based ; and being so, it is not, never was, and never can be a theocracy. Of course, such an idea as to Presbyterianism is utterly beyond the intellectual purview of Mr Lang ; but Professor Gardiner sees it clearly. He writes :—

“Presbyterianism had many faults ; but, at least, its existence rendered impossible a return to a mode of government, which had been tried and found

wanting. It rested in the Church on an organisation proceeding out of the nation itself, in the form of elderships, classes, and assemblies, rather than on an organisation proceeding from the king" (*Civil War*, vol. iii., page 190).

In fact, this able writer pays repeated testimony to the great and beneficial influence that Presbyterianism, in England as well as Scotland, exercised in the great struggle for civil and religious liberty during the Civil War. Thus he writes (page 126):—

"Nations, even in times of revolution, take no sudden forward leaps; and the task of the Presbyterians in establishing the authority of Parliament over the king, and the authority of the laity over the clergy, was in itself such an enormous stride in advance as to make it in the highest degree improbable that the Independents would gain the approbation of Parliament for their further reforms."

And again, in a previous paragraph of the same volume (page 79), he writes:—

"It is no matter for surprise that the city (London) was tenaciously Presbyterian. The fear of ecclesiastical tyranny, which was so strong on the benches of the House of Commons, had no terrors for the merchants and tradesmen of the city. By filling the elderships, those very merchants and tradesmen constituted the Church for purposes of jurisdiction. Whatever ecclesiastical tyranny there was, would be exercised by themselves."

It will here be seen, that the view of Presbyterian polity taken by Professor Gardiner, is totally opposed to the view taken by Mr Andrew Lang. Both are Oxford men ; but while the view taken by Professor Gardiner, is that of a deep-thinking and philosophic historian, the view taken by Mr Lang is like that of a callous and shallow-minded curate, who thinks that in loudly denouncing and abusing Presbyterianism, he has taken the first step towards becoming a bishop. Mr Lang's view of Presbyterianism has evidently been written in an Oxford ecclesiastical fog of the very densest character. And out of this fog he excitedly calls to the Scottish people to beware of their Presbyterian leaders, and to follow *him*. Poor Mr Lang!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## ANGLICAN INTOLERANCE.

WHAT further, then, shall be said of this third volume of Mr Lang's so-called history? What, indeed, can be said of it, but that it is the work of a—no doubt—clever, but weak-kneed Scot, on whose mind the petty and paltry influence of the common room of an Oxford college has outweighed the romance and the glory of the history of his native land. The Church, to which, presumably, Mr Lang now adheres, and which apparently has upset the balance of his not very robust intellect, is undoubtedly a noble Church, and has excellences, many and great. All this, intelligent Presbyterians willingly admit. They recognise, also, that as a political organisation the Anglican Church has been, till recent times, if not the first, at least one of the chief bulwarks of the Reformation. But in the matter of tolerance, with which Mr Lang deals so largely in this portion of his history, the most cursory survey of the present position of the two Churches of England and of Scotland, must lead every unprejudiced observer to

the conclusion, that while the greater Church has miserably retrograded, the smaller one has largely advanced, and is now a long way ahead of her greater and more ambitious sister. All intelligent Scottish Presbyterians regard the Church of England as a religious organisation, with which it is their desire and their duty to work in the utmost possible harmony. They are so imbued with the modern spirit as to acknowledge that mere diversity of creed need not interfere with, or prevent unity of action in any religious or social movement for the advancement and improvement of humanity. They will admit with pleasure to their pulpits any Anglican clergyman who may desire to show in that way his broad-mindedness and his Christian brotherhood. But when they look for reciprocity of Christian intercourse from the Anglican Church, they look in vain. It was different in the latter half of the sixteenth century. John Knox was offered the Bishopric of Rochester, and several of the Scottish Presbyterian ministers occasionally officiated in English churches, when driven temporarily from Scotland by religious strife. But in these days of the twentieth century, the most eminent minister of the Church of Scotland will not be allowed to officiate in an English cathedral, or even in the most humble



parish church. He is looked on simply as a layman, and is treated as a layman ; just, it may be remarked as the bishops and clergymen of the English Church are treated by the bishops and priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

Many liberal-minded Anglican clergymen, and even some of the bishops, regret this exclusiveness, and would like that it were otherwise. But they are helpless. The Act of Uniformity of 1662, I believe, stands in the way. That Act is a civil ordinance, no doubt ; but there it stands, as an unremoved monument of Anglican bigotry coming down from the seventeenth century. If the Anglican Church and its more active adherents were possessed of an enlightened and tolerant spirit, is it to be supposed for a moment that they, holding practically for such a purpose the control of the British Parliament, could not remove from the statute book this discreditable relic of seventeenth century bigotry ? They are active enough when aggression is their object, but mute and torpid when liberalisation is required. It cannot be urged that the form which this phase of ecclesiastical narrowness and exclusiveness takes, is one latent and comparatively unknown. Intercourse in these days between England and Scotland is of so close and constant a character, that this trait of

Anglican exclusiveness and antagonism to Presbyterianism must be well known to every intelligent Anglican. Why, then, is it allowed to continue? I believe I am correct in saying that, at present, were the Right Reverend the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, by any chance or mischance, to be found officiating in the pulpit of an English parish church, he would be liable to be arraigned before a civil court for brawling in church. And yet the Anglican Church, which still allows this disgraceful Act to remain unrepealed, and as one of her supposed bulwarks, our latest historian of Scotland assumes, by contrast, to place before his readers as a model of enlightenment and of liberality.

This exclusive and narrow-minded attitude of the Anglican Church towards the Church of Scotland is not confined to England. It has been exhibited also, in a very marked way, in recent years, in India, where the Presbyterian chaplains to the Scottish regiments have been debarred from holding service in churches which were once common to both Anglicans and Presbyterians. "The Committee on the Work of the Church (of Scotland) in India and Ceylon" brought before the meetings of the General Assembly in 1903 and in 1904 reports dealing with this question, which show pretty clearly that had it not been for

the interference of the Government, the Presbyterian soldiers of the Crown would have been deprived in a great many important stations in India of any opportunity of public worship, except in theatres, lecture halls, and similar buildings. And the worst feature of the reports laid before the General Assembly, seems to be, that so far as the doings of the Anglican authorities are concerned, they seem to have become more bigoted and illiberal as time went on. Lord George Hamilton, Under Secretary of State for India, wrote: "It is obvious that the seat of the difficulty is the Act of Consecration."

The conclusion that must inevitably be drawn from these evidences of Anglican exclusiveness, is one highly unfavourable to the Church of England. Instead of exhibiting a friendly and brotherly feeling towards the other British Protestant Churches, such as might be expected in these modern days, she seems to be retrograding towards the intolerance of the seventeenth century. Mr Lang's diatribes about Presbyterian bigotry are therefore peculiarly inapplicable at the present time. For the facts show, that now the Presbyterian Church is the liberal Church, and the Anglican Church the bigoted one. His jibes and jeers and denunciations against Presbyterianism are therefore meaningless, and only recoil

on himself and on the Church whose cause he so unwisely champions.

Mr Lang will probably say, "What has all this to do with the actions of the Presbyterians in the seventeenth century?" To this I reply, that it is exceedingly pertinent. One of Mr Lang's chief charges against the Presbyterian polity of the seventeenth century, is, that it was quite inconsistent with the carrying on of the civil government of the state. He, for this reason, denounces Presbyterians and Presbyterianism with great virulence and great fierceness, his object apparently being to try to make it appear that it is not a Church fit for intelligent and cultured men. He is evidently unable to distinguish between a passing phase of ecclesiastical action and the permanent and abiding principles which would in a very short time neutralise and destroy that action. A pyramid cannot stand, except for a moment, on its apex; neither can a Church based on Presbyterian polity, except for an interval, as it were, take a course that is opposed to the will of its people—that is, of the state, if the people are Presbyterians. And to bring out the working of this important principle more clearly and more strongly, I point to the difference of the action of the Presbyterian Church and of the Anglican Church

in these days; and how ecclesiastical edifices that were built in India for the common use of Anglicans and Presbyterians, have been taken from the service of the latter in a way that is highly discreditable to the acting authorities of the Church of England.

So much for Anglican toleration and for Presbyterian toleration! Of course, the excuse and reply of Mr Lang will be that by the rules of the Anglican Church, no person can officiate in a consecrated building unless he is a priest, or in other words, unless he has been ordained by a bishop. But if so, where is the spirit of toleration that Mr Lang seems to regard as the proud prerogative of the Anglican Church? Is it to be credited in these days, that a dogma, so narrow and so exclusive in its nature as that of Apostolic Succession, must of necessity be recognised and adopted, before man can be allowed to worship the Almighty in spirit and in truth. It may be, that like Charles the First, many may regard this dogma of transcendent importance, and may say, that without it, religious worship is null and void. Let such men and women hold to their opinion by all means; but at the same time, let them avoid the blunder of Mr Lang, and keep from denouncing Presbyterian intolerance. The highly-cultured and supposed-to-be-learned and

broad-minded leaders of Anglicanism have, in fact, in these days, taken up towards other non-Episcopal Protestant Churches, the attitude that in the seventeenth century was assumed for a short time by the earnest but narrow-minded zealots of Presbyterianism towards the Church of England and other Churches. But the bigotry of the Presbyterians of the seventeenth century was the bigotry of the time. The bigotry of the Anglican Church of the present day is different, inasmuch as it is a sinning against the light. It is an attempt to reintroduce into the Christian life of to-day the narrow and bigoted views characteristic of a hierarchy, which assumes and demands that modern society shall be placed under its heel, and that all science and all progress shall be not only under its guidance, but under its control. From that blunder and that folly, the Presbyterian and its allied Churches have long shaken themselves free, while the Anglican Church and its allies seem to be gradually again assuming the yoke that was thrown off at the Reformation.

#### MR LANG'S ANTI-SCOTTICISM—HIS HYSTERICAL STYLE.

I might point out much more of Mr Lang's

blundering and of his unfairness, when dealing with the cruel work of King James' Government against the Covenanters; but probably I have done enough to show that as a history of Scotland during the momentous period of the seventeenth century between 1625 and 1690, Mr Lang's third volume is an utter failure. I have dealt somewhat severely with it in my remarks; but no Scotsman who has any regard for the honour of his country can well do otherwise. To pander to English ignorance, and to English prejudice at the expense of the honour of his native country, may seem a trifling matter to an Anglicised Scot; but it is an offence against good feeling and good taste, which is abhorrent to all true and sturdy Scotsmen; and which must also be distasteful to every fair-minded and patriotic Englishman. For it must be apparent that if a Scot deliberately belittles his own country, presumably in order to ingratiate himself with the predominant English majority, he is not likely to be a very worthy addition to the roll of English patriots. But if Mr Lang has written a volume which to me seems in the highest degree prejudiced and unfair, it is only fair to add that in it he has shown to the literary world that at least he possesses the great merit of originality, and has not slavishly



followed the style of any of his historical predecessors. He seems to have founded a new school, or rather evolved a new style of writing history. We have had the dignified style, the picturesque style, the romantic style, the philosophic style, and even the comic style; and now we have Mr Lang bringing before the reading public what may be described as the hysterical style. And as in these jaded days of public life, any spark of originality, even though it may be misdirected, is perhaps not without merit of a sort, let this then be placed to the credit of Mr Lang. It may indeed be the case, that a craving and striving for originality may have been a leading cause of Mr Lang's many blunders. Feeling that his jerky but plodding annalistic style of writing history was not likely to attract attention, he may have been induced to take a hint from the tactics of "the shrieking sisterhood," and to pen his wild sentences such as "ravens not yet gorged with gore"; "this is the theology of Anahuac and Ashanti"; "the stupidest of superstitions"; "these wolves"; "under the heels of the saints"; "would soil the calendar of hell"; "the infamy of the fanatic preachers," etc., in order to attract public attention to his views. To a certain extent he has succeeded. He has vilified Scotland and her national creed in a manner



that fortunately is quite uncommon in these days. But in doing so, in traducing so unjustly and so unfairly the good name and the good fame of Scotland, Mr Lang must surely have forgotten the character and the spirit of the national motto, which after a three hundred years' sustained effort at conquest, England—wiser than Mr Lang—at last took to heart and thoroughly understood :

*“Nemo me impune lacessit.”*

THE END.